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Submission date: 02-Jul-2019 07:41AM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1148553085

File name: full_paper_International_Seminar_UNSRi.doc (61K)

Word count: 3388

Character count: 18341

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**SELF-CONCEPT IN SEXUAL BEHAVIOR
OF CAMPUS CHICKEN'S (*AYAM KAMPUS*) IN SEMARANG**

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ABSTRACT

Background and aims: At adolescent period they begin to have curiosity about sex and it is no surprising to see them getting involved with sex as prostitutes (*ayam kampus*). Normally someone's behavior is controlled by norms and values she holds on. **This study aims to explore the** self concept of "Campus Chicken's" in Semarang.

Methods: It was a case study qualitative study, using Symbolic Interactions theory to explore the meaning of self concepts. Informants were obtained by snowball chain sampling and thematic analysis was used to analyze the data.

Results: Most respondents are convinced that they are congenial, open, sociable and physically attractive. This self assessment makes them confident in looking for clients. Extramarital sex is no longer taboo for them since they have already had sex since their early adolescence. Respondents completely realize how to position themselves as students and *ayam kampus* by cover their profession and refuse the prostitute label because the label is only addressed to those staying in localization area. Their exposure to night life gives them self esteem to assess themselves. To internalize their role some of them ask for mystical help from paranormals to implant a charm needle (called *susuk* or *pengasih*) on their body to attract more clients.

Conclusion: "Campus Chicken's" has a positive self concept, proved they could recognize themselves and keep all information about them as well.

Keywords : Campus chicken's, Self Concept

Introduction

The transition of adolescence to adulthood is the most crucial time in someone's life. It is the period which is identical with sexual desire. Hall believes that adolescence (12 – 25) is a storm period reflecting modern culture that contradicts the traditional one. For example, traditional culture values virginity and intra-marital sexual relationship.⁽¹⁾ Sexual desire must be fulfilled in a legal marriage. However, due to lack of parental and societal advisory and control, adolescents who can no longer suppress their sexual desire will satisfy it by having extra-marital sexual relationship. They might come from a religious family. However, when they have to be parted from their environment, this transitional phase might be worrisome.⁽²⁾

Adolescents grow both sexually and physically. At this period they begin to have attraction to their opposite sex. This impacts their behavior. They will do things to attract their opposite. They begin to have curiosity about sex. In order to satisfy their curiosity, they hug, kiss and neck their opposite sex. Sometimes they do it in public places. And university students who are still in this phase do the same things. Sexual activities are a part of their life. Therefore, it is no surprising to see them getting involved with sex as prostitutes.⁽¹⁾

University student prostitutes or known as *ayam kampus* ("campus chicken's") differ from professional prostitutes in the way that *ayam kampus* are not target-orientated. Also, they do not ambitiously look for clients since they consider what they do as a side job. Besides, they highly charge themselves for the services they perform.⁽³⁾ The emergence of *ayam kampus* is believed to be an iceberg phenomenon whose actual number far outweighs the identified one. Prostitution among university students is completely shielded. In order to keep their status and image as students, their transaction is highly confidential and organized.⁽⁶⁾ Contacting clients is always conducted via cellular phone by a middleman or broker. This business is illicitly backed up by officers.⁽⁴⁾

There are some factors contributing to the emergence of *ayam kampus* including economical factor and peer pressure.⁽⁶⁾ Some of them blame their friends for introducing this profession to them. Others feel that being a prostitute is the only way they can do to make ends meet. They need money for their daily needs and for their expensive tuition fee.⁽⁶⁾

Research conducted by Litbang LPM Manunggal UNDIP Semarang in 2006 on causes of student prostitutes or *ayam kampus* finds that the biggest factor is economy (47%). The second is lifestyle (22.6%). The third is peer pressure (21.8%). Another one is pleasure (6%) and finally, prestige makes up the last reason (2.6%).⁽³⁾

Symbolic interaction theorists focus more on subjective aspects on social aspects than objective aspects which are important aspects in social structure. Human beings have to adapt to their surroundings and they are able to do this because they are born with the ability to understand.⁽⁷⁾ Many student prostitutes get into prostitution because they cannot resist their friends' influence. Someone's behavior is controlled by norms and values she/he holds on. Normally people hold on to the same values or norms their role models do.⁽⁸⁾

Self concept is the way human being perceives herself/himself as an object. It is composed of identities, self evaluation, attitudes, beliefs, values and motives. In short, it is about how we judge ourselves.⁽⁹⁾

Material and the Way Research

Case study with qualitative exploration is the method employed in this research.

The subjects are university students in Semarang who meet the following criteria:

- a. Registered in universities in Semarang
- b. 18 – 24 years old
- c. Prostitutes
- d. Willing to answer

Subjects are acquired through snow ball chain sampling technique. In-depth interview is used in collecting data that are later analyzed thematically. This method is employed to identify, analyze and report patterns.⁽¹⁰⁾

Results and Discussion

Most respondents believe that they have some strong points to offer. They are convinced that they are sociable, congenial, physically attractive, and open. Only a few respondents, beginners and below 20 years, perceive themselves as introverts. Those new comers still feel awkward in answering the questions. When interviewed, they seem to be nervous while pacing around, looking for target man.

Some respondents are communicative. They talk a lot about themselves and their profession. Some respondents know each other because they are friends. One of them admits that she introduced one of her friends to night life/*dugem* (dunia gemerlap), but somehow she claims herself to be more adaptable, sociable and experienced in terms of picking target clients, holding cigarettes and dancing. She strongly believes that prostitutes should possess high interpersonal skills. Therefore she has to adjust herself to different clients. She should know how to please them. She often encounters high-rank officers of some governmental institutions. That requires her and her other fellow prostitutes to understand the ethics of this business so that clients will respect them and give them good pay.

Most respondents started their career as *ayam kampus* after they were introduced to the business by a friend. Others were initially offered a position in young executive clubs where they had to serve customers. Still others found their way through night life. Their boy friends made them learn the ropes about becoming *ayam kampus*. In addition, some began as sales promotion girls, the profession that allowed them to meet different

people from different walks of life and required them to meet sales target. In order to reach the target, they would contact businessmen or other rich clients. To make these prospective clients buy some products, they would do anything clients asked, including sexual activities. They call this special service. This worked well. For example, some clients bought 10 products after they got that sexual service. These kinds of clients are called *peresan*- someone who is willing to give more money. Extra money earned was sometimes spent for fun, for example for treating their fellow sales promotion girls.

Some *ayam kampus* admit that they start commercializing their sexual activity by the time they get into university. However, some of them already started their sex life when they were in senior high school as they were party lovers who were close to drugs and sexual activities.

Being recognized or not as *ayam kampus* does not really affect the doers' social life in their campus. Some *ayam kampus* might act and dress like non-*ayam kampus* do. *Ayam kampus* can mingle and camouflage. They are convinced that becoming *ayam kampus* is one way to show their existence among their peers since they can do things other university students cannot, such as going to night clubs, staying in a five star hotel, consuming liquor and getting to know public figures with high authorities. However, a few respondents mind themselves being called prostitutes as they are not in localization area. Although they agree that *ayam kampus* label has negative connotation, they will get upset whenever they hear someone calling them *ayam kampus*. However, they completely realize what they do, as can be seen from their following statements:

"Yes, some of my friends know what I do for a living, but I don't really care. I just take it easy. I'm not the only one who does that profession." (WM, VL_21 years old)

"Yes, I don't give a damn. This is what I do in Semarang. If we're not doing this because we're ashamed, who's going to support us financially and pay our tuition fee? So, just take it easy." (WM, JS_20 years old)

As prostitutes, *ayam kampus* are close with alcohol and drugs. This makes them conform less to norms and values. They might be good and religious girls at first, but after they get into this profession, they will violate any norms they used to hold on. That

is why some *ayam kampus* like to go to paranormals, asking for their magical help. Some *ayam kampus* spend money to buy charm needles (*susuk*) to be inserted into their body. The purpose is to attract clients. Men who see these *ayam kampus* will have a special feeling. It can be pity, love, passion or trust. *Ayam kampus* may appear as sweet, congenial, attractive, pitiful or stern women.

"I don't intend to look beautiful. I wear susuk in order that people feel pitiful on me and that they will buy anything I say. Some people say that I look beautiful and attractive today, stern and mean another day and plain some other time. The way I look changes depending on the person who looks at me." (WM, NV_21 years old)

Some *ayam kampus* benefit a lot from implanting *susuk*. They believe they earn more money. Clients believe in *ayam kampus*' story and feel sorry. Then undoubtedly give the girls certain amount of money as bonus.

However, some respondents find out that some clients do not get bothered with how *ayam kampus* look. Sexual service is more important than beauty. Clients look for different styles and endurance in sexual interactions. Some clients play active role in sexual intercourse. The others are passive. It is the job of *ayam kampus* to be able to perform both roles as a part of their service.

Most respondents dress like other non-*ayam kampus* do in their campus daily life. Therefore, only a limited number of students know respondents' profession. They are usually close friends. Respondents extremely carefully keep their status. So, during in-depth interview, they really made sure there was no CCTV or any hidden cameras. Only a small number of respondents stand out. They wear tight, mini and sexy dresses with some accessories on their body. Besides, they put on thick make up. The way they walk and talk is completely different. They have high self-confidence and are sociable. They are usually center of attention.

Some respondents realize that they cannot have this profession for good. Some day they will and should quit. And when they do, it must be because either they do not want to add more sins or they already find "Mister Right", someone who is willing to take them as they are and is able to get them out of prostitution. Surprisingly, a few

respondents have met someone who takes them as they are, but still they do not quit the profession. It is no wonder. The job gives them a lot of money.

"I hope there is someone who can take me out of this profession and support me financially. So, I can make my ends meet. The most important thing is he can take me as I am. I will definitely quit." (WM, VL_21 years old)

Although respondents have permissive attitude towards norm-violating behaviors, they completely realize that what they do is sinful.

"Of course I want to quit, because I know it is wrong. Every religion forbids prostitution. It violates conduct norms as well. So I have to quit. (WM, JS_20 years old)

Self is regarded as a central mechanism in which individuals interact with each other in a society. Self is described as symbolic interaction highlighting rational thinking, not emotion.⁽¹¹⁾ Some theories on self describe self concept as the way individuals think and feel about themselves as an object. Self concept is composed of various identities, self evaluation, attitudes, belief, values and motives. In other words, self concept is about how we perceive and judge ourselves.⁽¹⁰⁾ Most respondents describe themselves as open, sociable, sexy and attractive women. This indicates that they have knowledge on how they look and that they are able to evaluate their physical appearance and performance.

Self concept consists of two aspects: cognition and affection. Cognitive aspect is individual's knowledge about herself/himself that will later result in self image/picture while affective aspect will form self acceptance and self esteem of individuals.⁽¹²⁾

Discussion group see *ayam kampus* negatively. Despite the fact that prostitution is not accepted in society, some respondents accept themselves as *ayam kampus*, a profession prone to sexually transmitted infection. However, to show their self esteem, *ayam kampus* cover their profession. They do not disclose what they really do to their friends. In short, individuals' behavior is a reflection of how they view themselves. In

other words, self concept determines the behavior. There are some factors contributing to self concept and physical imaging/labeling is among others. Society has a set of standard labels or judgments attached to certain physical characters or postures. For example, women with slim body and above average height are considered ideal and attractive.⁽¹²⁾

According to Goffman, self is a set of conscience in continuously picking roles, acting accordingly, evaluating them, and improving them. This way identity is formed. Therefore, society, as viewers create public identity which individuals know how to show and keep it in social interaction.⁽¹¹⁾ As mentioned before, some *ayam kampus* object being called so. They are good at covering their profession (prostitute). They perfectly blend with other non-*ayam kampus* students. Therefore, some discussion group members find it difficult to identify student prostitutes. However, a few members can spot *ayam kampus* from the way they dress and interact with their friends. They are fashionable and have a good network. So, self is individualized through other people's attitude and behavior.⁽¹¹⁾

As mentioned before, most respondents get into this profession because of their peers. Irawati Imron confirms that during adolescence, peer pressure is so strong that adolescents cannot resist. They tolerate extra-marital sex. What is done by most peers is considered the right thing to do and that is what is expected from a community member.⁽¹³⁾ Skinner states that surrounding or environment really shapes individual's personality. So, individuals' attitude and behavior is reinforced by society, including peers.⁽¹⁴⁾

Most respondents have already got in touch with sex since they were in senior high. Other respondents had their first sex when they got into university. At first they did that out of their curiosity but later they cannot stop it. They cannot resist their sexual desire and they need to satisfy it.⁽¹⁵⁾ All respondents had their first sex with their boyfriends.

Living in this Information Era, exposure to western or another culture is something inevitable. Adolescents or university students are exposed to high-class lifestyles which cost them a lot of money. Besides survival needs, there are other needs to meet. To be fashionable, they buy expensive clothes and go with the latest fashion. Besides, they spend some money on bags, shoes and other accessories. Also, they need

to entertain and indulge themselves by going to movies, beauty parlors and spa, and fitness centers. To meet all the needs, students need much money. In fact, the pocket money they receive from their parent is usually not enough. Therefore, some of them make their own money by becoming a prostitute.⁽¹⁶⁾ It is considered an easy job since you do not need high education. Furthermore, it makes money quite easily. Compared to time and energy spent, prostitution is one of the most financially rewarding jobs. University students can make a living while attending their classes. They land on both professions. In other words, it is really difficult for some university students to resist the financial temptation of the job. LPM Manunggal confirms that 47% respondents become *ayam kampus* due to economical or financial reason. The research was conducted in 2006 on 266 respondents.⁽³⁾

Respondents completely realize their roles as students and *ayam kampus*. They know how to position themselves. When they are in campus, they behave like other students do. But outside the campus they are just people making a living by becoming *ayam kampus*. To internalize their role as *ayam kampus* some of them ask for mystical help from paranormals to implant a charm needle (called *susuk* or *pengasihhan*) on their body. This *susuk* is believed to attract more clients so that *ayam kampus* will earn more money.

Respondents' conformity to their role as prostitutes forms an identity in society. However, individuals are active and reflective agents who have the ability to decide and form self identity that will determine their behavior. Self identity is about how they assess and accept their role in society. How they internalize their identity is reflected on their behavior.⁽¹¹⁾

Social control, in a form of social criticism, may not keep all students from becoming prostitutes. However, it consists of self criticism that may affect individuals.⁽¹¹⁾ Therefore, some *ayam kampus* think of quitting this profession someday. It indicates that they criticize what they do. To some extent, there is little self acceptance to their own profession. In other words, self concept is influenced by physical labeling or imaging, self assessment and self acceptance.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Most respondents are convinced that they are congenial, open, sociable and physically attractive. This self assessment makes them confident in looking for clients who need their sexual service. Extramarital sex is no longer taboo for them since they have already had sex since their early adolescence: in their high school time or at the beginning of their university time. They later commercialize their sexual activity for some reasons. The most common one is money.

Most respondents do not accept their identity. They cover their profession. Disclosing it is something shameful. They object being called prostitutes. They refuse that label because they suppose that the label is only addressed to those staying in localization area. Their exposure to night life gives them self esteem to assess themselves.

It showed that "Campus Chicken's" has a positive self concept, proved they could recognize themselves and keeps all information about them as well.

Improving their self esteem and self concepts, counseling, entrepreneurship and cross program collaboration are necessary to prevent thus group from HIV and AIDS infection.

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